United Nations

Daily Highlights

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MONDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Secretary-General urges all parties to conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina to stop violence, reduce tension and secure safety of international personnel.

+ Secretary-General's Personal Representative in Afghanistan and Pakistan, Benon Sevan, meets in Kabul with President of Afghan Interim Council for talks on overall situation in that country, as well as humanitarian needs and return of refugees.

+ Secretary-General's Special Representative for Cambodia, Yasushi Akashi, says United Nations Transitional Authority has established "positive presence" in that country and is "working well" with the Supreme National Council; announces establishment of Cambodian Mine Action Centre.

+ Chairman of Committee on Climate Change Convention introduces proposals on limiting greenhouse gas emissions and financing mechanism for Convention.

+ Eighth United Nations inspection team confirms that Iraq has destroyed unilaterally large numbers of chemical munitions consistent with Iraqi declarations.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali today strongly urged all parties to stop the violence and reduce prevailing tension in Bosnia-Herzegovina, particularly in Sarajevo. He also called on all parties to respect and ensure the safety of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) and other international personnel.

In a statement issued at Headquarters today, the Secretary-General said that he was "extremely disturbed by the grave developments which took place in Bosnia-Herzegovina during the last 48 hours". He said the vicious circle of attacks and retaliation could only aggravate the tragic situation engulfing the region. "It is the urgent responsibility of all the leaders in

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Bosnia-Herzegovina and its neighbours to bring an end to the violence which has already claimed too many innocent lives", Mr. Boutros-Ghali said.

He went on to say that it was imperative that negotiations under the auspices of the European Community were resumed and "genuine efforts" were made by all "to restore peace and respect for human rights for all the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina".

The Under-Secretary-General for Peace-keeping Operations, Marrack Goulding, arrived today in Yugoslavia to examine the feasibility of a United Nations peace-keeping operation in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Mr. Goulding would begin a two-day visit to Sarajevo tomorrow, following which he would return to Belgrade. On Friday, 8 May, he would visit the eastern sector and Zagreb, before returning to New York.

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The Secretary-General's Personal Representative in Afghanistan and Pakistan, Benon Sevan, met today with the President of the Interim Council in Kabul for a discussion of the overall situation in Afghanistan, the humanitarian needs and the return of refugees, a United Nations spokesman said today.

Mr. Sevan would hold further meetings with Afghan commanders tomorrow, 5 May, and would be in Pakistan on Wednesday for meetings expected to last a few days.

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Yasushi Akashi, the Secretary-General's Special Representative for Cambodia said today that the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) had established a positive presence in that country and was working well with the Supreme National Council.

Mr. Akashi, who was speaking to correspondents at a press briefing at Headquarters, also said that the Khmer Rouge continues to deny the United Nations free access to the five regions controlled by the group. He pointed out that United Nations access to the zones was necessary so that officials could plan for the next stage of its operation in Cambodia.

According to Mr. Akashi, 4,000 United Nations personnel, including some 3,600 troops, were now in Cambodia. However, UNTAC would need an additional 11,600 personnel by 1 June, when the second part of the cease-fire agreement is scheduled to take effect, he said. Mr Akashi further stressed that an international conference of donor countries was scheduled for the end of June in Tokyo, to seek financial support for the rehabilitation of Cambodia.

The UNTAC is mandated to monitor the cease-fire agreement signed last October in Paris between the four Cambodian parties who now are now making up the Supreme National Council. The other mandates of the United Nations personnel are: to help the Cambodians on human rights; to prepare for free and

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fair elections scheduled for next May; to monitor the repatriation of 375,000 refugees, and to help with the mine-clearing operations.

In that regard, Mr. Akashi announced that the United Nations is organizing the Cambodian Mine Action Centre to be headed by the President of the Supreme National Council, Prince Norodom Sihanouk. Its aim is to train about 5,000 Cambodians in mine clearance by the end of the year. Even so, the Special Representative said, mines will be a hazzard in Cambodia "for years, possibly decades to come".

Mr. Akashi said he would be submitting a report on all aspects of the Cambodian mission to the Security Council within the few days, which he said "will hopefully accelerate the deployment of United Nations personnel".

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New proposals concerning commitments on national measures to limit emissions of greenhouse gases, as well as a financing mechanism for a framework convention to combat global warming -- centrepiece of the convention -- were introduced Saturday, 2 May, by the Chairman of the Intergovernmental Committee drafting the instrument.

Jean Ripert (France), Chairman of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for a Framework Convention on Climate Change, who drew up the draft proposals, said they were aimed at facilitating the negotiations. He also said the draft texts were not the views of the French Government, but his own. Among the provisions, one deals with specific commitments by the developed countries parties to the convention to adopt national policies and corresponding measures to mitigate climate change. Those countries would further commit themselves to provide new and additional financial resources needed by developing countries parties to the convention to implement their commitments under the instrument.

Responding to the new texts, some delegates generally welcomed them, saying they were a good basis for further negotiations, while others expressed concern that issues agreed upon earlier had not been incorporated. Still others said the commitments on limiting greenhouse gas emissions were not clear about the stabilization and reduction of those gases.

The convention is expected to be presented to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), to be held at Rio de Janeiro in June.

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The eighth United Nations inspection team today confirmed that Iraq has destroyed unilaterally large numbers of chemical munitions and that the numbers are consistent with Iraqi declarations.

The objective of the inspection team, which was led by Jim Knapp, was to verify Iraq's declaration unilaterally to have destroyed 24,270 chemical

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munitions and quantities of chemical precursors, last summer. The team visited 20 sites in Iraq from 15 to 29 April and submitted its report to the Special Commission on Iraqi Disarmament today.

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